



SASEC Events



- [Agenda](#)
- [Amended TOR](#)

Nepal: SPS and TBT National Consultation **13 June 2016: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Nepal's Ministry of Commerce, together with the Asian Development Bank and other government agencies, conducted a national consultation on sanitary/phytosanitary (SPS) and technical barriers to trade (TBT), in preparation for launching a national SPS/TBT diagnostic study, under the SASEC Program. The terms of reference and tentative schedule for the diagnostic study were agreed.

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- [Agenda](#)
- [SASUN TOR](#)

SASEC ASYCUDA Subregional Network Meeting **8-9 June 2016: Kathmandu, Nepal**

The SASEC ASYCUDA Subregional Network (SASUN)—established by Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka as a platform to improve technical capacity of Customs administrations at a subregional level—has met to draft its terms of reference. The Meeting agreed that SASUN will seek collaborative solutions for common issues to enable the four SASEC ASYCUDA user countries to achieve higher levels of efficiency and optimal system sustainability.

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- [SASEC Trade Facilitation Strategic Framework](#)

India: Second National Workshop on Customs Valuation and On-site Post-Clearance Audit **6-9 June 2016: New Delhi, India**

A total of 28 Indian Customs officials were guided by technical experts to develop a deeper understanding of training methodology, and were updated on the subject of Customs valuation and on-site post-clearance. These skills will be used in onward training to the broader base of Customs officers, by the trained trainers. The Workshop also drafted further plans to improve on-site post-clearance audit in India.

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SASEC Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Upcoming SASEC Events

Nepal: ASYCUDA World Training in Sirsiya Dry Port
26 June - 22 July 2016
Birgunj, Nepal

Bangladesh: Post Clearance Audit Training
17-21, 24 July 2016
Chittagong, Bangladesh

Bhutan: Workshop on HS Classification
25-29 July 2016
Thimphu, Bhutan

Nepal: TTFMM National Validation Workshop
28-29 July 2016
Kathmandu, Nepal

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SASEC Projects



- [ADB Blog](#)
- [SASEC Event](#)

ADB Blog: Why We Should Be Happy When SASEC Customs Officials Talk More **28 June 2016: Manila, Philippines**

Ms. Rose McKenzie, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination, South Asia Regional Department, Asian Development Bank, shares how meetings between Customs officials from SASEC member countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka—reaps benefits for the SASEC subregion and beyond.

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- [Prothom-Alo](#)
- [ADB Project Data Sheet](#)

Bangladesh Set to Upgrade 1,752 Kilometers of Roads **18 June 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Bangladesh has adopted a multi-dimensional plan to upgrade 1,752 kilometers of highways to four lanes. The Government of Bangladesh is already implementing the 69-kilometer Joydebpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elenga four-lane project under the SASEC Road Connectivity Project.

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- [SASEC Event](#)

ADB Blog: High Hopes for BBIN Vehicle Agreement, One Year On **15 June 2016: Manila, Philippines**

Mr. Ronald Butiong, Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination, South Asia Regional Department, Asian Development Bank, describes how the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement, a landmark framework agreement signed by the transport ministers of the BBIN countries in June 2015 in Thimphu, Bhutan, is paving the way for a more integrated and more prosperous South Asian region.

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SASEC News



- [ADB News](#)
- [Bangladesh PPP Authority](#)

ADB-Bangladesh PPP Road Project to Boost Dhaka's Intercity Connectivity **30 June 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Rampura-Amulia-Demra public-private partnership (PPP) road project in Bangladesh will be developed into a four-lane 13.5-kilometer access road under a transaction advisory services agreement between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Bangladesh Public-Private Partnership Authority. The project complements ADB's existing support to the Bangladesh Roads and Highways Department for intercity road connectivity under the SASEC Program.

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- [SASEC Corridor Maps](#)
- [SASEC Mobile App](#)

Interactive SASEC Corridor Map on Website **30 June 2016: Manila, Philippines**

The interactive SASEC Corridor Map on the SASEC Program website and SASEC Mobile App is your gateway to SASEC projects. View SASEC projects by sector—energy, transport, trade facilitation, and ICT—or by corridor using the interactive map, to learn how the SASEC program is helping promote regional prosperity in South Asia. The map also includes project information and links to SASEC project pages.

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- [Financial Express](#)

ADB Earmarks \$4.1 Billion for Bangladesh, Including \$300 Million for SASEC Road Connectivity

25 June 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has earmarked \$4.10 billion for Bangladesh for the 2016-2019 period, subject to project readiness. This includes \$50 million for the proposed SASEC Road Connectivity Project-II and \$200 million for the Chittagong-Cox's Bazar railway project. ADB is also allotting \$300 million for power generation and \$194 million for rural infrastructure maintenance.

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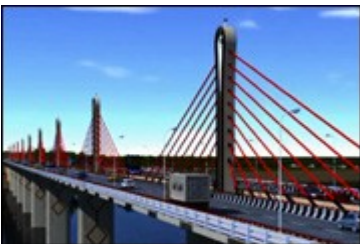
- [The Hindu](#)
- [Kathmandu Post](#)

Visakhapatnam Port Inaugurated as Nepal's Second Gateway Port

24 June 2016: Andhra Pradesh, India

Cargo bound for Nepal was flagged off symbolically from Visakhapatnam Port in India, signaling to traders that the port is ready to facilitate exports and imports as Nepal's second gateway port. A delegation from Nepal visited Visakhapatnam to see through implementation of the agreement and discuss modalities of cargo transit with Customs officials from India.

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- [ADB News](#)

Planned Longest River Bridge in India to Link to Nepal, Could Benefit 9 Million People

24 June 2016: Manila, Philippines

The Asian Development Bank has approved a \$500-million loan to build a bridge across the Ganges River that will link India and Nepal. The 9.8-kilometer bridge will be India's longest river bridge and will help people move between jobs and markets. It is projected to benefit 9 million people, especially those in poorer communities.

[Read More >>](#)



- [Business Standard](#)
- [Business Standard](#)

India Commerce Secretary Calls on Bureau to Internationalize Standards

23 June 2016: New Delhi, India

India Commerce Secretary Nirmala Sitharaman emphasized the need for the Bureau of Indian Standards to internationalize its standards to promote "zero defect" and global standards for Made in India products. She called for an end to days of differential standards, and urged the Bureau to increase coordination with concerned ministries to streamline standards for locally made and imported items.

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- [Bhutan National Assembly](#)
- [Kuensel Online](#)

Bhutan's National Assembly Ratifies the BBIN MVA

21 June 2016: Thimphu, Bhutan

Bhutan's National Assembly ratified the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement (BBIN MVA) with 28 votes. Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay reiterated that the BBIN MVA would regulate cross-border movement of vehicles in the subregion through formulation of protocols. Implementation of the BBIN MVA will help strengthen Bhutan's existing ties with India, and boost cooperation and integration within the subregion.

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Bangladesh-India Transshipment Facility Reduces Distance to India's Northeast **19 June 2016: Agartala, India**

Launch of the Bangladesh-India transshipment facility concluded with the successful delivery of steel rods from Kolkata, India to Agartala, the capital of Tripura, through Akhaura land port in Bangladesh, onboard Bangladeshi trucks. The facility will allow India to deliver goods to the northeast region in an estimated 10-day time, and help boost trade in the region by enabling Bangladesh to transport goods to Nepal and Bhutan via India, and give India access to Myanmar via Bangladesh.

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- [BDNews24](#)
- [The Statesman](#)



India, Thailand to Increase Trade through Trade Agreement **18 June 2016: New Delhi, India**

India and Thailand have agreed to speed up talks on the India-Thailand Free Trade Agreement and bilateral investment treaty. The two countries also agreed to fast-track infrastructure projects linking each other, such as the Asian Trilateral Highway connecting India and Thailand through Myanmar.

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- [Livemint](#)



Bangladesh Prime Minister: Good Ties with Neighbors, Connectivity to Boost Trade

18 June 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh

Good relations, regional connectivity, and cooperation among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal countries boost trade and business in South Asia, said Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

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- [Daily Star](#)



Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Look Into Setting Up Trade Portals **13 June 2016: New Delhi, India**

Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have expressed interest in adopting best practices of the Indian Trade Portal in setting up their own trade portals to promote international trade. Trade portals to be set up by Bhutan and Nepal will also be useful for cargo being routed through India, and will contribute to the common documentation system needed to implement the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement.

[Read More >>](#)

- [Indian Trade Portal](#)
- [The Economic Times](#)



Bangladesh Seeks to Upgrade Jessore-Benapole Highway **11 June 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The Government of Bangladesh has completed its feasibility study and detailed design for a planned 38-km Jessore-Benapole highway upgrade. It is set to inject more than \$42 million to fund the Indo-Bangladesh transport corridor improvement to facilitate trade and connectivity. The Jessore-Benapole highway is central to several regional connectivity initiatives, including the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicle Agreement and the SAARC highway corridors.

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- [Financial Express](#)
- [World Bank Report](#)



Bhutan Standards Bureau Obtains Accreditation to Certify 3 Goods for Export **10 June 2016: Thimphu, Bhutan**

The Bhutan Standards Bureau received accreditation from the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies, India, to certify three products, including grade 43 ordinary Portland cement, bitumen emulsion, and thermomechanically treated reinforcement bars, for export. This reduces technical barriers to trade, facilitating free movement for these three types of products across Bhutanese borders.

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- [Kuensel Online](#)
- [SASEC Event](#)



Sri Lanka Trade Minister Sees Need for Comprehensive Trade Agreements **10 June 2016: Colombo, Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka needs to immediately put in place a comprehensive system of trade agreements, according to Mr. Malik Samarawickram, Sri Lanka Minister for International Trade. In a business forum in Singapore, Mr. Samarawickram highlighted Sri Lanka's efforts to remove certain tariffs and to modernize its Customs system through ASYCUDA and the one-stop shop at the Central Customs Clearance Unit.

[Read More >>](#)

- [Lanka Business Online](#)



Nepal Prime Minister Stresses Importance of South Asia Regional Cooperation **9 June 2016: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. KP Sharma Oli emphasized the importance of enhancing regional cooperation in South Asia, at the June 2016 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Cabinet Secretaries Meeting, where member states gathered to discuss good governance and how to resolve governance issues in the region.

[Read More >>](#)

- [The Himalayan Times](#)



Bhutan Parliament Passes New Customs Bill **7 June 2016: Thimphu, Bhutan**

The 7th Session of the Second Parliament of Bhutan passed the new Customs Bill. The Bill was drafted according to standards of the Revised Kyoto Convention, and aims to simplify and harmonize Customs procedures in the country and introduce international best practices in Customs. It aims to promote external trade, including trade with countries in the SAARC region, and bring increased revenue through risk management and automation.

[Read More >>](#)

- [Bhutan National Assembly](#)
- [Customs Bill of Bhutan 2015](#)



Dedicated Railway from Indian Ports to Nepal Sought to Reduce Cost of Trade **5 June 2016: Kathmandu, Nepal**

Nepal's private sector stakeholders are seeking a dedicated railway line from Nepal to Indian sea ports, including the Visakhapatnam Port, to reduce the cost of trade in the country. Mr. Rajan Sharma, Transport and Transit Committee Chair of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, noted that direct access to India's Visakhapatnam Port could bring transformational changes to Nepal's economy.

[Read More >>](#)

- [The Himalayan Times](#)
- [ADB Publication](#)



SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry and SAARC Development Fund to Co-finance Projects
5 June 2016: Kaluatra, Sri Lanka

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Development Fund (SDF) and SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry have pledged to collaborate and co-finance projects under the SDF's social, economic and infrastructure windows to promote regional connectivity across the SAARC region.

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- [Kuensel Online](#)
- [Business Standard](#)



India Promotes Easier Visa Regime among WTO Members
4 June 2016: New Delhi, India

India is working on a proposal to ease facilitation issues on trade in services including visa regimes among members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). WTO Director General Roberto Azevêdo welcomed India's proposal for trade facilitation agreement in services, and requested submission of a proposal to initiate discussions.

[Read More >>](#)

- [Economic Times](#)
- [Times of India](#)



Indian Entrepreneurs Invest in Bangladesh, Create 63,277 Jobs
4 June 2016: Agartala, India

Indian entrepreneurs have invested around \$458.14 million in Bangladesh, a move that has created 63,277 jobs, says Mr. Amir Hossain Amu, Ministry of Industries, Bangladesh. He also said Bangladesh is looking forward to being India's partner in tech industries.

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- [Business Standard](#)



India to Roll Out Agartala-Akhaura Broad Gauge Railway Service
2 June 2016: New Delhi, India

The 15-kilometer broad gauge rail service from Agartala, India, to Akhaura, Bangladesh, is set to be inaugurated. Funded by the Government of India, the railway project will reduce the 1,650-km distance between Agartala and Kolkata to 550 km and is foreseen to boost bilateral trade and business between the two neighboring countries.

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- [Financial Express](#)
- [Indian Express](#)



Nepal Power Summit Declares Need for \$20 Billion to Develop 10,000 MW
1 June 2016: Kathmandu, Nepal

The 2-day Nepal Power Investment Summit 2016 concluded with a declaration that Nepal needs \$20 billion to develop 10,000 megawatts through on-grid hydropower projects in the next decade. It also noted investment needs of \$5 billion for high-voltage transmission projects and other opportunities in the country's hydropower sector.

[Read More >>](#)

- [The Himalayan Times](#)
- [Nepal Power Investment Summit 2016](#)



Bangladesh Cabinet Endorses the Draft Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution Law 2016
30 May 2016: Dhaka, Bangladesh

A meeting of the Bangladesh Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has approved in principle the draft Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution Law 2016. The updated law includes an adjusted definition of "standards" from "foreign standards" to "international standards."

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- [BSTI](#)
- [BDNews24](#)



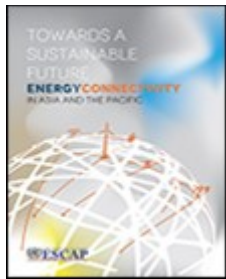
ADB, SDF Sign Pact to Co-finance Development Projects
19 May 2016: Thimphu, Bhutan

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Development Fund (SDF) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a memorandum of understanding to undertake development projects in the South Asian region.

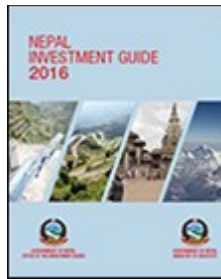
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- [SAARC Development Fund](#)

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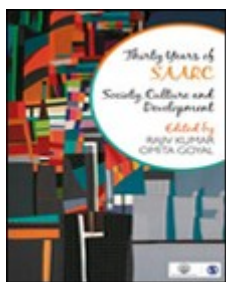
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